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MI 770 Christian Mission and Global Culture

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Asbury Theological Seminary
Spring Semester, 2005
Tuesdays, 6:00–8:50 p.m.

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[UPDATE BIBLIOGRAPHY]
MI770 / MS675. Christian Mission & Global Culture

DESCRIPTION

An examination of trends and currents that are shaping today's emerging global culture and an exploration of the challenges and opportunities these provide for authentic Christian witness. Developments in science, technology, economics, philosophy, religion, and popular culture are examined for their worldview implications, and the positive and negative aspects of postmodernity are assessed.

PURPOSES

1. To survey current cultural trends of global significance.
2. To discern and understand current and emerging worldviews.
3. To rethink Christian mission, including worldview, in the light of these currents.
4. To discern opportunities and challenges for authentic Christian witness today.

METHODOLOGY

Readings, lectures, and videos, plus focused research by students on selected topics, will constitute the principal methodology of the course.

STRUCTURE OF COURSE

We will follow the schedule indicated below. The assigned readings will provide the basic course structure. Class sessions will combine lecture, discussion of readings, student presentations, and videos. The course outline follows, for the most part, the structure of the book, *EarthCurrents*.

TEXTBOOKS

Friedman, Thomas L. *The Lexus and the Olive Tree: Understanding Globalization*. Rev. ed. Random House, 2000. 490 pp.

Moe-Lobeda, Cynthia D. *Healing a Broken World: Globalization and God*. Fortress, 2002. 228 pp.

Rifkin, Jeremy. *The Age of Access: The New Culture of Hypercapitalism Where All of Life is a Paid-For Experience*. Tarcher/Putnam, 2000. 312 pp.

Sine, Tom. *Mustard Seed versus McWorld: Reinventing Life and Faith for the Future*. Baker, 1999. 249 pp.

Snyder, Howard A. *Coherence in Christ: The Larger Meaning of Ecology*. General Board of Global Ministries, United Methodist Church, 2000. 24 pp.

Snyder, Howard A. *EarthCurrents: The Struggle for the World's Soul*. Abingdon, 1995. 334 pp.

RECOMMENDED [ON RESERVE in the Library]

Greider, William. *One World, Ready or Not: The Manic Logic of Global Capitalism*. Touchstone, 1997. 528 pp.

Postman, Neil. *Technopoly: The Surrender of Culture to Technology*. Vintage, 1993. 222 pp.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS

1. Participate in all class sessions, making informed contributions based on your reading and other research.
2. Complete all the assigned readings as per the schedule.
3. Watch for at least two hours per week: PBS' "Newshour" or other quality news program (*not* ABC, NBC, CBS, CNBC, or "Headline News"), or listen to at least two hours of NPR's "All Things Considered" each week. Be especially alert for items that have global significance, or that indicate important socio-cultural developments, and be prepared to report these to the class.
4. Read and review in class one of the books listed in the course bibliography that are marked with an asterisk (*) and turn in a 5–page written review of the book. The written review will be due on the date of the class presentation. Your choice should be made by the second week of class (Feb. 15).
5. Research Project: Each student will complete a major research project which will be presented in summary form in class (approx. 20 minutes). Choose a topic that especially interests you and that will make a contribution to your missiological preparation. Parameters:
 - a. Decide on a topic in consultation with the professor and/or the class.
 - b. Any topic is acceptable so long as it 1) relates to a significant global cultural trend and 2) focuses on a specific issue in Christian mission (whether evangelism, church planting, discipleship, compassion or justice ministries, urban mission, leadership training, etc.).
 - c. Turn in a 1 or 2–page project proposal on Feb. 22. The proposal should state briefly the rationale for the project, the proposed methodology, and the major resources you expect to use.

The research project should be submitted to the professor in the form of a research paper (with references and bibliography). Research papers are due May 10 but may be submitted earlier. This paper should be in the range of 20–25 pages, approximately.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

See the current seminary *Catalog*, p. 25. Attendance will be taken at each class. More than three unexcused absences will result in lowering the grade by one letter. Three unexcused tardies are considered to be equivalent to one unexcused absence.

EVALUATION

There will be no final exam. Grading will be based on the major course components, as follows:

Class participation, including input from readings:	40%
Book review, including oral presentation	20%
Research project:	<u>40%</u>
	100%

SCHEDULE AND ASSIGNED READING

- FEB. 8 – INTRODUCTION / OVERVIEW
- FEB. 15 – GLOBALIZATION AND GLOBAL TRENDS
Readings: Snyder, *EarthCurrents*, 10–45
 Friedman, ix–72
 Moe-Lobeda, xiii–29
Recommended: Greider, 11–53
- FEB. 22 – THE GLOBAL ECONOMY
Readings: Snyder, *EarthCurrents*, 46–63
 Friedman, 73–100
 Rifkin, 3–95
 Moe-Lobeda, 30–45
Recommended: Greider, 57–121
 Postman, xi–39
- MARCH 1 – GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT
Readings: Snyder, *EarthCurrents*, 64–87
 Friedman, 101–42
 Rifkin, 96–167
Recommended: Greider, 444–473
 Postman, 40–55
- MARCH 8 – GLOBAL SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY
Readings: Snyder, *EarthCurrents*, 88–115
 Friedman, 145–93
 Rifkin, 168–217
Recommended: Greider, 122–70
 Postman, 56–143
- MARCH 15 – GLOBAL CULTURE
Readings: Snyder, *EarthCurrents*, 116–50
 Friedman, 194–275
 Rifkin, 218–34
 Moe-Lobeda, 46–69
Recommended: Greider, 171–223
 Postman, 144–63
- MARCH 22 – [READING WEEK – NO CLASS]
- MARCH 29 – GLOBAL WORLDVIEWS
Readings: Snyder, *EarthCurrents*, 152–85
 Friedman, 276–324
 Rifkin, 235–66
Recommended: Greider, 227–284
 Postman, 164–99
- APRIL 5 – GLOBAL WORLDVIEWS
Readings: Snyder, *EarthCurrents*, 186–212
 Friedman, 327–405
 Moe-Lobeda, 73–99
Recommended: Greider, 285–330
- APRIL 12 – POSTMODERNITY

Readings: Snyder, *EarthCurrents*, 213–46
 Sine, 11–68
Recommended: Bryant, *The New Context of World Mission*, 4–59

APRIL 19 – GLOBAL MISSION: ISSUES

Readings: Snyder, *EarthCurrents*, 247–76
 Friedman, 406–33
 Moe-Lobeda, 100–32
 Sine, 69–121
 Barcott, “Starbucks Nation” (Hand-out)
Recommended: Greider, 334–443

APRIL 26 – GLOBAL MISSION: THEOLOGY

Readings: Snyder, *EarthCurrents*, 277–306
 Sine, 123–67
 Snyder, *Coherence*, 1–22

MAY 3 – GLOBAL MISSION: STRATEGIES

Readings: Sine, 169–92
 Friedman, 434–75
 Moe-Lobeda, 133–50

MAY 10 – GLOBAL MISSION: PRIORITIES

Readings: Sine, 193–240
 Moe-Lobeda, 151–72
Recommended: Adeney, *God’s Foreign Policy*.

Select Bibliography - MI770 / MS675

(See also the bibliographies and reference notes in the assigned textbooks.)

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- * Anderson, Mary B. *Do No Harm: How Aid Can Support Peace—or War*. Lynne Rienner Publishers, 150 pp.
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- * Appleby, R. Scott. *Religious Fundamentalisms and Global Conflict*. Ithaca, NY: Foreign Policy Association, 1994.
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